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California Postsecondary Education Commission

Resident Undergraduate Charges at California's Public Colleges and Universities

Over the past 15 years, California has significantly increased fees for its residents attending the State's public colleges and universities. All three of California's public postsecondary education segments charge resident students a systemwide enrollment fee. In addition, the California State University and the University of California also charge students mandatory, campus-based fees. These campus-based fees help support student services such as counseling, student union activities, student government, and recreation. California has sought to avoid charging resident students for the direct cost of instruction. That cost is referred to as "tuition" and is charged to nonresident students.

What do the California Community Colleges charge resident students?

Resident systemwide student fees in the California Community Colleges in 2006-07 were \$26 per credit unit in the fall term (\$390 for 15 units) and \$20 per unit in winter term (\$300 for 15 units). The fees for the academic year total \$690. This amount is lower than the fees charged by any other state in the nation. Financially-needy students may qualify for the Board of Governor's fee waiver program. The state with the next lowest community college resident fees is New Mexico where fees are \$1,243 for 2006-07—\$553 more than is paid by California residents. In 2006-07, the average amount charged to a full-time resident community college student nationally is \$2,642—nearly four times the amount charged by California's community colleges.

What does the California State University charge resident students?

For the 2006-07 academic year, the California State University charged full-time resident undergraduate students an average of \$3,199 in mandatory fees. This amount includes \$2,520 in systemwide student fees and an average of \$679 in campus-based fees. This total is lower than each of the 15 public universities with which the California State University compares itself for faculty salary purposes, and is \$3,466 lower than that group's average:

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Newark	\$9,994
University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT	8,660
University of Maryland, Baltimore County	8,622
Illinois State University, Normal, IL	8,039
Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH	7,920
Wayne State University, Detroit, MI	7,300
University at Albany, State University of New York	6,727
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee	6,630
George Mason University, Fairfax, VA	6,408
University of Texas at Arlington	6,400
University of Colorado at Denver	5,300
Georgia State University, Atlanta	4,818
North Carolina State University, Raleigh	4,781
Arizona State University, Tempe	4,690
University of Nevada, Reno	3,684
Average of the comparison group	\$6,665
Average CSU undergraduate mandatory fees	\$3,199

What does the University of California charge resident students?

For 2006-07, the University of California charged full-time undergraduate residents an average of \$6,852 in mandatory charges. This includes systemwide student fees of \$6,141 and campus-based fees that average \$711. These mandatory

fees do not include the cost of health insurance. Students who do not have health insurance are required to pay for such coverage. Each University of California campus sets the cost of student health insurance. The \$6,852 in total mandatory charges for resident undergraduate students is lower than three of the four public universities that the University of California compares itself with regarding faculty salaries, and is \$1,502 lower than the average of that group:

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	\$9,723
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	\$9,522
University of Virginia, Charlottesville	\$8,043
University at Buffalo, The State University of New York	\$6,129
Average of the comparison group	\$8,354
Average UC undergraduate mandatory fees (excluding health insurance)	\$6,852

The cost of attendance at both the UC and the CSU is much greater than their fees suggest. As noted in the recent Commission report on college affordability (CPEC 06-22), students fees constitute only 22% of the average cost of attendance at the CSU and 34% of this cost at UC. In light of the escalating total cost of college attendance, the Commission has recommended a five-year freeze on student fees.

California, the federal government, and higher education institutions operate a variety of financial assistance programs for needy and non-needy students (grants, loans, work study, etc.) that can reduce students' tuition and fee costs, and help pay other costs of college attendance. For example, the State's Cal Grant program provides more than \$800 million annually in financial aid to Californians attending both public and independent institutions.

What has the Governor proposed in terms of changes to resident undergraduate student fees for the 2007-08 fiscal year?

The Governor's Proposed 2007-08 State Budget assumes yet-to-be-approved mandatory resident student fee increases of 10% for the CSU and 7% for UC. Both the CSU Board of Trustees and the UC Board of Regents will hear fee proposals that will most likely match the Governor's proposal at their March meetings. The Governor proposes no changes in the recently lowered \$20 per unit enrollment fee in the community colleges. As noted above, the current \$20 credit unit charge translates into \$690 annually for a full-time community college student.

Based on current information (not accounting for any changes in tuition at the comparison institutions) and assuming the CSU's fee proposal goes into effect, mandatory fees for full-time resident undergraduates in the CSU will continue to be lower than all of its 15 public faculty salary comparison institutions. Further, the CSU's fees will be about half the average amount charged by their comparators in 2007-08. If the UC's fee proposal goes into effect, full-time resident fees for undergraduates at the University of California will likely remain lower than the average amount charged by the University of California's public faculty salary comparison institutions.

Who are undergraduate resident students?

The community colleges and the CSU determine the residency of their students according to State law, which defines resident students for tuition purposes as those who (1) have lived in California for at least one year and one day prior to enrolling in a college or university, and (2) intend to make California their home. A student may demonstrate an intent to reside in California through a number of means, including obtaining a California driver's license, owning or renting property in the state, registering a vehicle in California, and paying California personal income taxes. State law allows nonresident students who have attended a California high school for three years and graduated to be considered as residents for tuition purposes.

Generally, undergraduate students at the University of California are considered nonresidents if their parents reside out-of-state. They may be classified as California residents if they can demonstrate that they are financially independent of their parents for at least two years prior to being classified as a resident. Generally, it takes about three years for eligible out-of-state undergraduate students to qualify as California residents for tuition purposes.